



Handsome Alice  
THEATRE



*A scathing, hilarious satire  
of gender portrayals  
in popular culture*

FEBRUARY 29 – MARCH 10, 2024 • MOTEL THEATRE, ARTS COMMONS

# BEAUTIFUL MAN

By ERIN SHIELDS Directed by CLARE PREUSS • Co-produced by DOWNSTAGE, HANDSOME ALICE and VERB THEATRE

Starring MEG FARHALL LINDA KEE KATELYN MORISHITA JOEL DAVID TAYLOR • Stage Manager NAOMI ESAU

Designers ABBIE BROKENSHIRE (Costumes) CASSIE HOLMES (Set) ADAM KOSTIUK (Lights) KP SMITH (composition/sound)





# Beautiful Man

Written by Erin Shields

A Co-Production by Downstage, Handsome Alice  
& Verb Theatre



February 29 - March 10, 2024



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## Press Kit

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In this biting satire about the portrayal of women in film and television, three friends take us on a whirlwind tour of a world where women rule society as politicians, hunters, queens and policewomen - all while gazing at the semi-nude Beautiful Man. This comedy joyfully exposes the insidious and toxic aspects of popular culture with a sense of playful audacity. You'll never watch your favourite binge-worthy shows the same way again.

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## SHOW DETAILS

### Location

Motel Theatre, Arts Commons

### Tickets

ON SALE NOW!

All tickets are \$36.60

# CAST & CREATIVE TEAM

Starring - Meg Farhall, Linda Kee,  
Katelyn Morishita, Joel David Taylor

Playwright - Erin Shields

Director - Clare Preuss

Assistant Director - Michael Rolfe

Stage Manager - Naomi Esau

Costume Designer - Abbie Brokenshire

Set Designer - Cassie Holmes

Lighting Designer - Adam Kostiuk

Composer & Sound Designer - KP Smith

Assistant Light Designer - Natalia Cortes

"HYSTERICALLY FUNNY, BRILLIANT, BRUTAL" Now  
Magazine



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## CREATIVE TEAM BIOGRAPHIES

### Meg Farhall

Meg is a Calgary-based performer and theatre maker. She is Artistic Producer at Handsome Alice Theatre and is currently Interim Artistic Producer at The Shakespeare Company. She is absolutely thrilled to be working with the Beautiful Man team! Select Performance Credits include: The Replacement (SAL) Parts and Labour (Field Work) Between Us, inVISIBLE (Handsome Alice) Hamlet: A Ghost Story (Vertigo Theatre & The Shakespeare Company), Much Ado About Nothing, Romeo & Juliet, Macbeth (The Shakespeare Company) A Streetcar Named Desire (Spirit Fire Theatre)The Club (Theatre Yes/High Performance Rodeo). Film and TV: This Too Shall Pass (Indi) Faultline (Indi) Operation: Clean Slate, Word of Mouth (Green Productions) Second Hand Luxury, Circle of Steel (KinoSum) TinStar (Prime), Jann (CTV) Heartland (CBC) Wynona Earp (SciFi) Young Drunk Punk (CBC).



### Linda Kee

Linda is an actor, writer and producer working on stage and in film and television. She brings teaching artistry, mindful movement, and her experience as a Forum Theatre Facilitator into her work as an Alberta based creative, working in arts education with community building organizations such as The Jubilee Auditoria Society's Jube School, Arts Commons Education and the University of Calgary School of Creative and Performing Arts, Drama Division. Linda believes that theatre and the performing arts are vehicles for positive social transformation. Her ancestral roots are from the Philippines. She is a second generation Canadian and feels blessed to be a part of the Downstage family."

### For more information, please contact:

Aldona Barutowicz, Publicist  
Email: [aldonabpr@gmail.com](mailto:aldonabpr@gmail.com)  
Phone: 1 (403) 471-5308

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## **Katelyn Morishita**

Katelyn is beyond excited to be a part of this production. Select acting credits include *Naughty but Nice* (Forte Theatre), *One Act Play Festival* (Verb), *Mizushobai the Water Trade* (Tableau D'Hote), *The Sound of Music* (Rosebud Theatre), *Forgiveness*, *Steel Magnolias & Billy Elliot* (Theatre Calgary), *Cowgirl Up* (Alberta Theatre Projects), *Classic Country Roads* (Chemainus Theatre), *Murder In The Studio* (Vertigo Theatre). Select directing credits include *9 to 5 The Musical – AD* (Citadel Theatre), *Scattered the Musical -Director* (SideNote Theatre), *The Shift – AD* (One Act Play Festival), *Junior Claus the Musical* (StoryBook Theatre). Sending big love to her family and her besties who continue to put up with her.

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## **Joel David Taylor**

Joel David Taylor is thrilled to be back at Downstage alongside such a talented group of artists! Joel is an alumnus of Mount Royal University and holds a BFA in Acting from the University of Alberta. Previously for Downstage: *SMOKE*. Other selected credits include: *LOVE'S HEAVY BURDEN*, *OTHELLO* (The Shakespeare Company), *A MIDSUMMER NIGHT'S DREAM*, *THE COMEDY OF ERRORS* (Shakespeare by the Bow), *LITTLE WOMEN* (swing. Theatre Calgary). Film and TV: *Heartland*, *Project Six Shooter*, *Foul*, *Tribal*, and *Hell on Wheels*. When not acting you can find Joel fiddling with the guitar or playing far too much *Magic the Gathering*. Enjoy the show!



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## Erin Shields

Erin Shields is a Canadian playwright based in Toronto. Much of her work highlights the negation or misrepresentation of women in classical texts by adapting these stories through a feminist lens for a contemporary audience. Her most recent projects include additional text for Shakespeare's *Much Ado About Nothing* at The Stratford Festival and *Queen Goneril* which premiered at Soulpepper Theatre in rep with *King Lear*. Her adaptation of *Paradise Lost* (Stratford Festival), won the Quebec Writers Federation Prize for Playwriting. In 2011, Erin won the Governor General's Award for her play *If We Were Birds*, which premiered at Tarragon Theatre. Other theatre credits include: *Jane Eyre* (Citadel Theatre), *Piaf/Dietrich* (Mirvish Productions/Segal Centre), *Beautiful Man* (Factory Theatre), *The Lady from the Sea* (The Shaw Festival), *The Millennial Malcontent* and *Soliciting Temptation* (Tarragon Theatre) and *Instant* (Geordie Theatre). Erin's plays are published by Playwrights Canada Press and you can read more about upcoming projects on her website – [www.erinshields.ca](http://www.erinshields.ca).

## Clare Preuss

Clare is a multidisciplinary artist who has worked across Turtle Island as well as in Germany, Lebanon, Switzerland and Uganda. Selected Directing Credits: *A Poem for Rabia* (Co-Directed with Donna-Michelle St. Benard - Tarragon Theatre), *Hunt/Peck* (short film – Downstage, New Harlem Productions), *Climate Shorts: 14 Short Plays About the Climate Crisis* (Downstage, World Stage Design, University of Calgary), *She Spreads* (Dead Roads Collective), *A Dinner Party*, *Goodnight Desdemona Good Morning Juliet*, *Myth of the Ostrich* (Guild Theatre Whitehorse), *Real Job* (Cardiac Theatre, Downstage, Alberta Queer Calendar Project), *Men Express Their Feelings* (Downstage, Hit & Myth Productions), *Bystander* (Gwaandak Theatre), *White Girls in Moccasins* (Rhubarb Festival), *CAKE* (New Harlem Productions, Theatre Passe Muraille), *Tartan Lady*, *Tuesdays & Sundays* (Sundown Theatre), *L'armoire des ombres* (Theatre Monnot Beirut), *Dead Roads* (Why Not Theatre's Riser Project), *Salome's Clothes* (SummerWorks), *Give It Up* (New Harlem Productions). Clare is the Artistic Director at Downstage.



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## Michael Rolfe

Michael is a queer improviser, writer, director, and actor in Calgary, who was most recently seen on-stage in *The Importance of Being Earnest* at Theatre Calgary where his performance earned him nominations for a Betty Mitchell Award and Critic's Choice Award for Outstanding Performance in a Comedy. He is passionate about crafting humor and queer joy in his work, always aiming to add elation when and where he can. Recently, he had the pleasure of directing *The Complete Works of William Shakespeare (Abridged)* for The Shakespeare Company's Bard in the Yard event last summer. He's excited to be working on *A Beautiful Man* as his Downstage Theatre debut and thanks his partner, his community, and his family for their love, their kindness, and their patronage of the arts.

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## Naomi Esau

Naomi is thrilled to be back working with Downstage this season! Past Stage Management Credits include, For Downstage: *All Good this Must Begin*, *The F Word*, and *Men Express Their Feelings*. Elsewhere: *Magic Lies: An Evening with W.O. Mitchell*, *A Christmas Story*, *Sherlock Holmes and the Case of the Christmas Carol*, *The Christians*, *An Inspector Calls*. (Rosebud Theatre), *A Midsummer Night's Dream* (Shakespeare on the Go – Theatre Calgary), *Meteor Shower* (ASM), *The Importance of Being Earnest* (APSM- Theatre Calgary) *Makambe Speaks* (Ghost River Theatre), *Gaslight* (ASM-Vertigo Theatre), *Heaven* (APSM-Lunchbox Theatre), and *Much Ado About Nothing* (CYPT). She is also an actor, musician, seamstress, part- time princess and baker of many cupcakes.



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## Abbie Brokenshire

Abbie Brokenshire is a Calgary based costume designer, wardrobe technician and stylist. She is delighted to be designing and collaborating with so many talented artists on Beautiful Man. Select credits include Real Boi (CYPT), Struck(Ghost River), Perennial (Dancer's Studio West), Sherlock Holmes and the Vanishing Thimble (Vertigo), Misery (Vertigo). Special thanks to her husband, Willum, for his constant support and unwavering confidence in all endeavors.

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## Cassie Holmes

Cassie (she/her) is a scenographer, theatre artist, designer, creator, and collaborator. Cassie's work spans all areas of theatre design, projection, sound, costume, set and lighting, select credits include: Kisapmata (Chromatic Theatre; Lunchbox Theatre), With Bells On (Lunchbox Theatre) A Monster Calls (U of C SCPA), Argonautika (U of C SCPA), and Hookman (Chromatic Theatre; U of C SCPA). Cassie is an advocate for the queer and disabled community, she works to make theatre a more inclusive space through her art. She specifically researches accessibility in live performance and lighting diverse skin tones. She works with the Nation accessArts Center as a design consultant and technical translator, working to help curb barriers in design. Cassie is also a recent graduate from the University of Calgary's Master of Fine Arts in Design and Technical Theatre.



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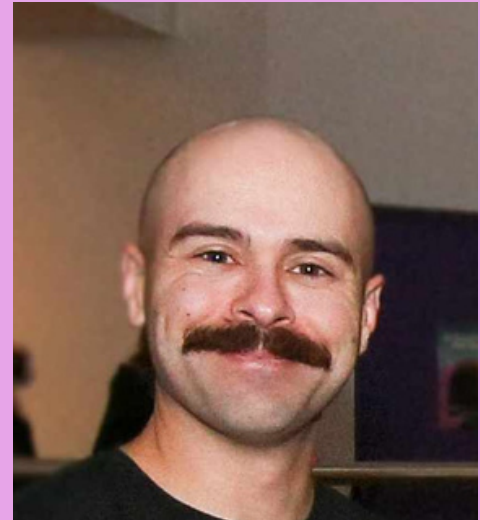
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## Adam Kostiuk

Adam is a local production manager and lighting designer, currently (and proudly) working as the PM for Downstages 2023/24 season.



## Kathryn Smith

Kathryn Smith is a queer and trans theatre director, designer, and creator who has worked across Canada for the last 10 years. Their focus lies in queer community and new work. They are the Artistic Director of Verb Theatre which strives to present 'tomorrows theatre today', and they are a part of the Mudfoot Theatre Collective which practices eco-friendly and sustainable performance art. Select Theatre Credits: A Chitenge Story, inVISIBLE Too (Handsome Alice Theatre); Safe Site Sessions, Bottle Picker Monologues (Downstage Theatre); The F Word (Presented by Alberta Theatre Projects, A Downstage Theatre Production in Association With Handsome Alice Theatre and Theatre Calgary) We're Gonna Die, Something In the Garden (Verb Theatre); Countries Shaped Like Stars (Lunchbox Theatre); Selma Burke (Theatre Calgary); Murder In the Studio, Ms. Holmes & Ms. Watson: Apartment 2B (Vertigo Theatre) Bright Half Life (Persephone Theatre); Yabber: A Folk Opera (Mudfoot Theatre). Kathryn is also an award winning singer songwriter under the name KP Smith. Love to Lara and Scout.



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## **Natalia Cortes**

Natalia Cortes is a multidisciplinary artist based in Calgary, Alberta. In recent years, her love for community inspired work has brought her to work with companies such as The River Clyde Pageant, Calgary Young People's Theatre, Ignite! Youth Arts Festival, and Green Fools Theatre Society. Natalia's practice currently revolves around creating intimate/community inspired pieces that utilize design, non-verbal and folk storytelling devices. Most recently she debuted a one-act shadow play piece 'An Ode to Home' at the 2023 Toronto Fringe Festival. Natalia is so eager to join the team of a Beautiful Man and looks forward to learning from her mentors and further connecting with the theatre community here in Calgary.



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## Aldona Barutowicz

Aldona B has been a publicist for the past 15 years with a focus on theatre and entertainment. Her clients include the Calgary International Film Festival, Downstage, Hit & Myth Productions, Ghost River Theatre, W&M Physical Theatre to name a few.

Her work also includes assisting fellow entrepreneurs to grow their businesses and help them to identify their unique voice. Through Aldona B Creative she offers communications, photography and fashion styling services.

Aldona is also on the Board of Directors with the Calgary Allied Arts Foundation, a not-for-profit organization focusing on supporting visual artists in Calgary. Her current role with CAAF is of Board President. Constantly striving to enhance our communities and city's profile, it is her infectious passion for her work - and clients - that set her apart.

## Hayley Dechaine

Hayley's passion for writing, storytelling, and communicating in a way for others to enjoy, ultimately led her to the public relations program at Mount Royal University, where she received her degree in 2023.

In 2021, Hayley started as an intern at Aldona B Creative, gaining experience in PR while simultaneously applying her skillset to her love of arts and entertainment. In 2022, Hayley became Aldona B Creative's PR Coordinator, a position she has continued full-time since acquiring her degree, working with clients such as the Calgary International Film Festival, Downstage, Forte Musical Theatre Guild and Swallow-a-Bicycle Theatre.



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## ABOUT DOWNSTAGE

Downstage is an award-winning Calgary-based theatre company dedicated to producing plays that create meaningful conversation around social issues. Their plays provoke vibrant dialogue between Calgarians, both informally and through nightly post-performance discussions. For more information on Downstage, please visit [www.downstage.ca](http://www.downstage.ca).

## ABOUT VERB THEATRE

TOMORROW'S THEATRE TODAY - At Verb Theatre our mission is to provide for our audiences theatrical experiences that explore cutting edge ideas in cutting edge ways. We look to explore conversations and theatrical forms that will be important to our audiences tomorrow with our surprising, important, and innovative performance. And as for you? We simply invite you to expect the unexpected.

## ABOUT HANDSOME ALICE THEATRE

Since 2005, Handsome Alice Theatre has been devoted to amplifying women, non-binary and trans voices through theatre works that are inclusive, curious, and rebellious. The company has produced over twenty productions from the classic and contemporary canons, to premieres of new Canadian works. With artistic excellence leading their core values, artists associated with Handsome Alice Theatre productions have garnered two Betty Mitchell Awards, twenty Betty Mitchell Award nominations, and five Critics Choice Award nominations.

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“Downstage is thrilled to co-produce this Alberta premiere production of Beautiful Man at Arts Commons. This hilarious satire brilliantly portrays a world where women have no need to fight for power or protect their propriety. Gender roles are flipped as a way of provoking important discussion about social norms, media narratives and how we can grow together in community. It’s such a smart comedy and a great conversation starter!”

- Clare Preuss, Artistic Director at Downstage

“Beautiful Man is a topsy-turvy piece where women hold all the power cards. This thought-provoking play challenges perceptions and boldly examines how mass media shapes our understanding of gender. Handsome Alice is thrilled to bring this hot piece to Calgary audiences.”

- Meg Farhall, Artistic Producer at Handsome Alice Theatre

“Verb has always been drawn to shows that examine societal challenges in cutting-edge ways. Beautiful Man does this perfectly by flipping the script on gender roles, standards, and our perception of how we “fit” into the world. We want to start a conversation with the audience that begins in the theatre and continues long after the show has ended.”

- KP Smith, Artistic Director at Verb Theatre

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